Average net rose 12 pct. through September

NADA reports rise in dealership profits

WASHINGTON. — Average dealership net profits increased 12.4 percent during the first nine months of 1982 compared with the year-earlier period, NADA reported.

In the same period, dealership gross profits increased 5 percent. NADA credited the increases to good expense controls and strong fixed operations.

Net profits before taxes averaged $70,510, a gain of 12.4 percent over the 1981 period, NADA said. Dealers also slightly increased net profits as a percentage of total sales, from 1.49 percent, to 1.58 percent.

Gross-profits averaged $660,030 in the 1982 period, a 5-percent increase over the $628,505 of the 1981 period. But grosses as a percentage of total sales declined — from 14.93 percent to 14.79 percent.

Expenses were held to a 4.2 percent increase, according to NADA.

The parts and service departments accounted for 40 percent of an average dealer's profits in the first nine months of 1982; the used-vehicle department, 31 percent, and the new-vehicle department, 29 percent.

The sales volume breakdown was new-vehicle department, 61.1 percent of total sales; used-vehicle department, 23 percent, and parts and service, 15.9 percent.

Average new-vehicle sales for the period were $2.73 million, up 4.5 percent from the $2.61 million average of the first nine months of 1981. Used-vehicle volume averaged $1.03 million, up 8.4 percent from the $947,181 of '81.

The biggest percentage increase was in service and parts volume, up 8.7 percent from an average of $652,503 to an average of $709,565 for the first nine months of 1982.

Dealers were able to reduce their floorplan costs $89 per vehicle during the first nine months of 1982, but more than half the gain was eroded by declines in new-vehicle gross profit rates, NADA said.

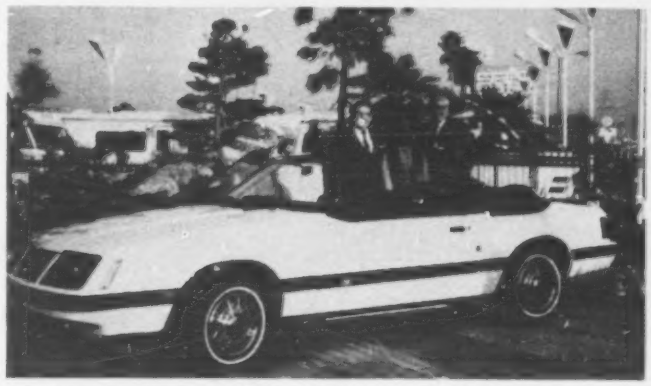
The average new car retailed for $9,800 during the first nine months of 1982, compared with $8,710 for the comparable 1981 period. That represented a 12.5-percent increase.

Grosses averaged $865 in the '82 period, or 8.8 percent of sales price, compared with $820, or 9.4 percent of sales price, in 1981.

• Lower interest rates, floorplan assistance and reduced inventories helped dealers cut their floorplan averages 32 percent, from an average of $278 per vehicle in early 1981 to $189 in the 1982 period.

NADA cautioned that rebates and increased holdbacks may mean that some of the profits are on paper only. But it said its data indicates the average dealer was in a better cash position at the end of September, compared with a year earlier, despite lags in payments from manufacturers.

Dealership sales averaged $4.46 million during the first nine months of 1982, a 6-percent gain over the $4.21 million of the year-earlier period.



It's the first for California

Burt Boeckmann, right, owner-president of Galpin Ford, Sepulveda, Calif., and John O'Donnell, Ford district manager, delivered California's first 1983 Mustang convertible to its new owner, Marcia Peterson, who is president of the local Chamber of Commerce. Peterson owned one of the original 1965 Mustang convertibles.

Firms rework diesel production strategy for Canada

Chrysler, Perkins trim engine plans

By Jim Plegue
Staff Writer

Chrysler Corp. and Perkins Engines, Inc., may eventually build both four- and six-cylinder diesel engines in a scaled-down operation in Trenton, Mich., following Chrysler's cancellation of an ambitious $367-million diesel production program in Windsor, Ont.

William Winemaster, president of Perkins Engines, said last week that his company is exploring the possibility of building 2.2-liter to 2.5-liter four-cylinder diesel engines at Chrysler's Trenton engine plant.

He said the engines could be built alongside Chrysler's 3.7-liter turbocharged six-cylinder truck diesel. Winemaster said negotiations with Chrysler will continue and "if it makes good business sense, we'll go ahead with it."

Perkins and Chrysler announced their original joint venture last August. Diesel engines were to have been built at Chrysler's idle Windsor engine plant, beginning with the truck diesel in 1984. Planned capacity was targeted at 240,000 engines per year. At that time, Chrysler said the Trenton plant would produce major components for Windsor assembly.

Last month, however, Chrysler said it was "deferring" its Canadian program "because of uncertain diesel sales" and last week, a Chrysler Canada spokesman confirmed a report that Chrysler's postponement had become a cancellation, again because of shrinking diesel sales.

• Although Chrysler scrapped the Windsor program and has put short-term diesel production plans on hold, a U. S. Chrysler spokesman admitted it is "likely" that Chrysler would eventually build a 3.7-liter six-cylinder turbo-diesel at Trenton.

A Canadian UAW official last week said Chrysler officials had told the union leaders of the company's intent to scrap the Windsor program and to build the 3.7-liter diesel in Trenton.

Perkins needs the new four-cylinder diesel engine to replace its current 20-year-old engine line, "which is coming to the end of its life," Winemaster said.

Perkins, he added, could sell 20,000 of the new diesel engines per year for non-automotive uses —fork lifts, welders, generators and construction equipment. He said the engine could also be used in future Chrysler vehicles, if the diesel market rebounds.

Meanwhile, Chrysler's cancellation of the Windsor program could force a review of its Canadian unit's eligibility for portions of a $25-million package of financial aid from federal, provincial and city governments.

The lion's share of that package is $200 million in (Canadian) federal loan guarantees provided to Chrysler in a 1981 agreement

Continued on Page 44, Col. 3

T-Bird Turbo Coupe to debut at $11,790

Ford's sleek new Thunderbird Turbo Coupe, a European-style luxury tourer, will debut this spring with a suggested retail price of $11,790.

The heart of the Turbo Coupe is Ford's new turbocharged 2.3-liter four-cylinder engine with port injection, mated to a five-speed manual overdrive transmission. First through fourth gears of the transmission are performance ratios, Ford said, while fifth gear is a 0.86:1 overdrive ratio.

Ford said its new powerteam can move the T-Bird from 0 to 60 MPH in about nine seconds, while yielding projected fuel-economy figures of 33 MPG highway, 21 city.

The coupe's turbocharged engine differs from Ford's earlier — and short lived — attempt (with the 1979 Mustang) in that it uses a "blow-through" design, is fuel-injected and is governed by Ford's sophisticated fourth-generation Elecontric Engine Control (EEC-VI) unit.

The blow-through design places the turbocharger ahead of the throttle, thereby providing crisper throttle response by keeping a slight pressure in the inlet system to overcome low-speed drag.

Ford's EEC-IV not only controls fuel-injection but also directs the exhaust-gas recirculating system, the ignition system and other functions.

The Thunderbird's aerodynamic body — Ford said it has a drag coefficient of 0.35 — has been enhanced in the Turbo Coupe by the addition of fog lamps and by eliminating most chrome trim.

The Turbo Coupe features a new rear suspension called Quadra Shock, a special four-bar link coil-spring system that uses two hydraulic axle dampers mounted horizontally between brackets on the axle and the body rail.

Ford said these dampers help maintain the dynamic stability of the rear axle during cornering and acceleration.

Inside, the Turbo Coupe has new articulated front bucket seats. The buckets have five separate adjustments — fore and aft, seat-back adjustment, adjustable thigh support, adjustable thigh cushions and inflatable lumbar support.

Other standard features include dual electric remote-control mirrors, tachometer, a light group, and leather-wrapped sport steering wheel and leather-wrapped shift knob.

Georgia dealership adds fifth GM franchise

ARMERCUS, Ga. — Oxford Motor Co. has added a Buick franchise and now handles five of the six General Motors vehicle lines. The dealership also has Pontiac, Cadillac, Oldsmobile and GMC.

AMC alters some prices on Eagle options, Jeeps

SOUTHFIELD, Mich.—American Motors has announced equipment revisions and price changes on vehicles and options in its Eagle and Jeep lines.

For Eagle, the six-cylinder engine and the California emissions package have been increased $10 each. The engine now is $165, and the emissions package is $75.

Base sticker prices of Eagles are unchanged, and there are no changes on Concord, Spirit or Renault models. AMC said the option hikes boosted the prices of average-equipped AMC cars $8, or 0.1 percent.

Steel-belted radial tires (black sidewalls) have been made standard equipment on Jeep CJ-5, CJ-7 and Scrambler models with no increase in the base vehicle price. The tires formerly were optional at $175 extra.

Steel-belted radial whitewalls ($175) were made standard equipment on the Jeep Wagoneer Brougham and the price was boosted $250. It now is $13,423.

Prices of three other Jeeps were raised $150 to $250 with no equipment changes.

The Cherokee four-door wagon jumped $150 and now is $12,156. The Sportside pickup rose $250 and now is $10,210, and the Wagoneer Limited climbed $250 and now is $17,139.

AMC said the net effect of the changes was an average decrease of $61, or 0.5 percent, when applied to the entire Jeep lineup.

There were no changes in dealer discounts or destination charges.

1982 AMCs, Jeeps recalled for fluid

SOUTHFIELD, Mich.—American Motors is recalling some 23,000 early-model 1982 AMC cars, Eagles and Jeeps equipped with four-speed or five-speed manual transmissions to replace the original transmission fluid with an improved lubricant.

AMC said the original fluid could cause the transmission to become damaged and inoperative.

AMC said it is aware of two accidents involving personal injuries which may be related to this condition.

Plan to streamline operations going to Ford board

DEARBORN. — A Ford Motor Co. 20-member blue-ribbon committee soon will offer Ford directors a plan to streamline operations associated with car product development. One anticipated result will be the elimination and downgrading of some management positions and other salaried positions.

It is expected that proposals from the year-old committee will be presented to directors at their meeting Thursday (Jan. 13).

No massive layoffs are involved and top brass is not affected, Ford said. It said changes are being induced by the state of the economy.

However, in the chassis engineering department here, for example, demotions by one or two classifications will be given to 46 of 93 entry-level managers, and 20 of 26 second-level supervisors will be reduced to entry level.

One level of management is being abolished by combining some supervisors with managers at the next higher level. That will mean there are four levels of management instead of five, the company said.

Reductions in staff size will come from attrition, the company said.

Since 1980, Ford has cut its white-collar forces by about one-quarter to a current level of around 54,000.

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58th year — No. 4949

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Plans firming up for Feb. 12-15 sessions

Iacocca, Koppel at NADA confab

WASHINGTON.—Chrysler Corp. Chairman Lee Iacocca will open the 66th annual NADA Convention and Exposition Saturday, Feb. 12, in Las Vegas.

The convention will continue through Tuesday, Feb. 15, at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

The annual Time Magazine Quality Dealer Awards will be presented at the opening session on Saturday (Feb. 12). Joining keynoter Iacocca on the rostrum will be George W. Lyles, outgoing NADA president, and Dr. Tom Haggai, who will give the invocation.

Ted Koppel, ABC News Nightline anchorman, and Dr. Heartsill Wilson, poet and author, will be featured speakers at Tuesday afternoon's general session. During that session, incoming NADA president William C. Turnbull will accept the gavel.

Turnbull is a GMC-International Harvester dealer in Huntington, W. Va.

Oral Roberts will lead the worship service Sunday in the Las Vegas Convention Center Rotunda.

The equipment exposition will be open Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.; Sunday, 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Monday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Tuesday, 9 a.m. to noon.

NADA will host its Diamond Dinner and Reception honoring Dealer Election Action Committee contributors on Tuesday (Feb. 15) at 7 p.m. in the Riviera Hotel Convention Center. Les Brown and His Band of Renown will play.

Beginning on Sunday, 27 workshops will be held. Attendees are eligible to earn Continuing Education Units, convertible to college credit at Northwood Institute.

The workshops will cover four categories: Business; dealer-employe; service, parts and body, and sales-lease.

Workshop topics in the business category include: Chain Operations—How to Get Three or More; The Effect of Recent Tax Rules on Dealerships; Expense and Internal Control; Smart Money Management, and F&I: Profit or Loss.

• In the dealer-employe category: Eliminating Management Burnout; Franchise Succession Rights; the Psychology of Change; Dealer Image in the Community, and Common Pitfalls of Estate Planning.

Service/parts/body workshops: Body Shop Building; Parts Marketing and Control; Service Management — NADA Service Systems, and Service Merchandising.

In the sales-lease category will be Advertising Dollars and Sense; Managing the New-Vehicle Department; Opportunities in Leasing; Professional Selling, and The Best Used Vehicle Ideas from NADA 20 Groups.

The Life Style Center, in the Las Vegas Convention Center, will be open the same hours as the exposition. The program will feature a fashion show Monday at 10 a.m.

Other Life Style attractions include the Las Vegas Adventure Tour and Conni Gordon's Paint Party—a popular attraction at the 1982 Atlanta convention.

Early registration begins Friday, Feb. 11, at 1:30 p.m. Registrations will also be taken during the hours the exposition is open. The headquarters hotel for the convention is the Las Vegas Hilton.

Auto dismantlers elect Spalding president

WASHINGTON.—Max Spalding, owner of Spalding Auto Parts, Spokane, Wash., is the new president of the Automotive Dismantlers and Recyclers of America. He succeeds Thomas J. Hankamp, Hankamp Auto Parts, Pleasant Valley, N. Y.

Other officers are Bruce Parsons, Parsons Auto Recyclers, Brigham City, Utah, first vice president; Frank W. Webber Jr., Chesterfield Auto, Richmond, Va., treasurer; Kennie Andersen, Andersen's Sales & Salvage, Inc., Greeley, Colo., second vice president, and Howard Veneklasen, Veneklasen Auto Parts, Holland, Mich., secretary.

POWER EQUIPMENT OPTIONS ON 1982 U. S. MODELS

	Power Brakes	% of Output	Power Steering	% of Output	Power Side Windows	% of Output	Rear Window Defroster	% of Output
AMERICAN MOTORS	54,112	76.32	67,641	95.41	4,012	5.66	36,648	51.69
Spirit	8,618	42.70	17,498	86.70	242	1.20	9,808	48.60
Concord	28,471	84.50	33,120	98.30	2,527	7.50	15,128	44.90
Eagle	17,023	100.00	17,023	100.00	1,243	7.30	11,712	68.80
CHRYSLER CORP.	580,483	10.16	621,062	10.87	137,494	2.41	332,981	5.83
C-P Total	372,139	6.51	394,217	6.90	116,818	2.05	205,842	3.60
Horizon	14,126	33.10	21,339	50.00	NA	—	19,717	46.20
TC3	14,297	33.50	20,870	48.90	NA	—	20,272	47.50
Reliant	143,233	88.10	151,525	93.20	3,739	2.30	30,565	18.80
Gran Fury	18,746	100.00	18,746	100.00	2,606	13.90	11,548	61.60
Imperial	2,717	100.00	2,717	100.00	2,717	100.00	2,717	100.00
Cordoba	19,147	100.00	19,147	100.00	10,799	56.40	11,565	60.40
LeBaron	103,310	100.00	103,310	100.00	40,394	39.10	52,895	51.20
New Yorker	56,563	100.00	56,563	100.00	56,563	100.00	56,563	100.00
Dodge Total	208,344	3.65	226,845	3.97	20,676	0.36	127,139	2.23
024	17,321	38.00	23,748	52.10	NA	—	20,375	44.70
Omni	12,274	33.70	17,847	49.00	NA	—	15,589	42.80
Aries	109,639	87.70	116,140	92.90	3,125	2.50	56,632	45.30
Diplomat	26,258	100.00	26,258	100.00	3,230	12.30	14,967	57.00
Dodge 400	34,340	100.00	34,340	100.00	10,474	30.50	14,869	43.30
Mirada	8,512	100.00	8,512	100.00	3,847	45.20	4,707	55.30
FORD MOTOR	1,149,213	20.12	1,119,115	19.59	284,901	4.99	725,229	12.70
Ford Division	780,408	13.66	738,076	12.92	106,501	1.86	444,485	7.70
Escort	221,301	69.50	185,638	58.30	NA	—	21,954	38.30
EXP	22,650	100.00	16,195	71.50	NA	—	22,650	100.00
Mustang/Mustang II	122,593	94.00	123,897	95.00	10,825	8.30	67,557	51.80
Granada	120,323	100.00	120,082	99.80	12,393	10.30	65,215	54.20
Thunderbird	45,142	100.00	45,142	100.00	26,814	59.40	29,884	66.20
Ford	120,660	100.00	120,660	100.00	54,297	45.00	77,826	64.50
Fairmont	127,739	100.00	126,462	99.00	2,172	1.70	59,399	46.50
L-M Division	368,805	6.46	381,039	6.67	178,400	3.12	280,744	4.91
LN7	11,540	100.00	8,401	72.80	NA	—	11,540	100.00
Lynx	45,752	45.70	63,271	63.20	NA	—	42,948	42.90
Capri	36,134	100.00	34,183	94.60	2,674	7.40	24,860	68.80
Zephyr	39,092	100.00	38,897	99.50	1,095	2.80	22,009	56.30
Cougar	56,950	100.00	56,950	100.00	10,536	18.50	29,956	52.60
XR-7	16,867	100.00	16,867	100.00	11,115	65.90	10,238	60.70
Mercury	77,157	100.00	77,157	100.00	67,667	87.70	65,738	85.20
Continental	23,908	100.00	23,908	100.00	23,908	100.00	23,908	100.00
Lincoln	35,069	100.00	35,069	100.00	35,069	100.00	27,214	77.60
Mark VI	26,336	100.00	26,336	100.00	26,336	100.00	22,333	84.80
GENERAL MOTORS	3,249,807	56.89	3,215,475	56.29	1,280,231	22.41	1,985,845	37.76
Buick Division	739,984	12.95	738,834	12.93	334,459	5.86	419,441	7.34
Skylark	144,560	100.00	144,560	100.00	16,769	11.60	81,676	56.50
Skyhawk	47,918	100.00	46,768	97.60	4,408	9.20	26,642	55.60
Century	102,965	100.00	102,965	100.00	37,067	36.00	62,912	61.10
Regal	225,418	100.00	225,418	100.00	96,479	42.80	108,426	48.10
Buick	175,052	100.00	175,052	100.00	135,665	77.50	107,657	61.50
Riviera	44,071	100.00	44,071	100.00	44,071	100.00	32,128	72.90
Cadillac Division	235,584	4.12	235,584	4.12	232,208	4.07	181,412	3.18
Cimarron	25,968	100.00	25,968	100.00	22,592	87.00	25,968	100.00
Seville	19,998	100.00	19,998	100.00	19,998	100.00	17,756	88.80
Eldorado	52,018	100.00	52,018	100.00	52,018	100.00	40,678	78.20
Cadillac	137,600	100.00	137,600	100.00	137,600	100.00	97,008	70.50
Chevrolet Division	1,082,169	18.94	1,055,142	18.47	265,963	4.66	724,795	12.69
Chevette	38,711	15.90	32,137	13.20	NA	—	93,977	38.60
Cavalier	195,024	100.00	168,111	86.20	15,992	8.20	176,302	90.40
Celebrity	92,314	100.00	92,314	100.00	14,124	15.30	48,834	52.90
Camaro	178,808	100.00	178,808	100.00	80,106	44.80	110,503	61.80
Citation	155,211	93.70	161,671	97.60	5,466	3.30	78,185	47.20
Malibu	116,125	100.00	116,125	100.00	12,425	10.70	58,411	50.30
Monte Carlo	92,391	100.00	92,391	100.00	30,397	32.90	40,652	44.00
Chevrolet	188,178	100.00	188,178	100.00	82,046	43.60	94,277	50.10
Corvette	25,407	100.00	25,407	100.00	25,407	100.00	23,654	93.10
Oldsmobile Division	702,340	12.30	703,340	12.30	257,715	4.51	395,741	6.93
Omega	77,469	100.00	77,469	100.00	7,584	9.79	44,700	57.70
Firenza	30,108	100.00	30,108	100.00	1,921	6.38	16,379	54.40
Cutlass/Supreme	194,337	100.00	194,337	100.00	66,832	34.30	88,181	45.80
Cutlass/Ciera	101,320	100.00	101,320	100.00	36,181	35.71	60,711	59.92
Oldsmobile	265,178	100.00	265,178	100.00	111,269	41.96	157,807	59.51
Toronado	33,928	100.00	33,928	100.00	33,928	100.00	26,963	79.47
Pontiac Division	489,730	8.57	483,575	8.47	189,886	3.32	264,456	4.63
J2000	118,859	100.00	109,231	91.90	10,935	9.20	53,249	44.80
T1000	5,514	12.40	8,004	18.00	NA	—	18,810	42.30
Firebird	116,364	100.00	116,364	100.00	69,120	59.40	71,331	61.30
Phoenix	47,444	96.50	48,427	98.50	3,638	7.40	26,697	54.30
Grand Prix	80,650	100.00	80,650	100.00	50,326	62.40	34,760	43.10
Bonneville/LeMans	80,440	100.00	80,440	100.00	41,748	51.90	38,692	48.10
6000	40,459	100.00	40,459	100.00	14,120	34.90	20,917	51.70
VOLKSWAGEN	102,664	100.00	12,012	11.70	NA	—	89,626	87.30
Total Cars, U. S.	5,136,279	89.92	5,035,305	88.15	1,706,638	29.88	3,170,329	55.50

Note: Figures are generally based on U. S. production. However, some Canadian-only sourced cars, or those where U. S. production does not give an accurate reading of the figures are included.

Specific models include Chrysler's Gran Fury, Cordoba, New Yorker, Diplomat and Mirada; Ford's standard-sized Ford, EXP, and LN7.

Figures are based on production of 5,712,297 U. S. models during 1982 model year, including 70,890 American Motors cars; 724,548 Chrysler Corp. cars; 1,308,516 Ford Motor cars; 3,505,671 General Motors cars and 102,664 Volkswagen cars.

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But strong finish stirs hope of better days ahead

'82 new-car sales lowest since '61

Continued from Page 1

448,048 units from 357,580 in 1981. Daily selling rate for the month was 17,233, up 25.30 percent from 13,753 a year earlier. There were 26 December selling days both years.

For the month, GM was up 17.40 percent, to 256,728 from 218,670. Ford was up 53.50 percent, to 110,578 from 72,036. Chrysler climbed 26.87 percent, to 60,954 from 48,045. AMC soared 77.72 percent above 1981, to 13,757 from 7,741, and VWoA plummetted to 6,031 from 11,088.

GM earned 57.30 percent of the domestic market in the twelfth month, down from 61.15 percent a year earlier. Ford gained more than four percentage points, expanding to 24.68 percent from 20.15 percent. Chrysler held 13.60 percent, up from 13.44 percent, VWoA dropped to 1.35 percent from 3.10 percent, and AMC had its best month of the year, earning 3.07 percent, up from 2.16 percent.

In December, Imperial and AMC were the only makes to miss their year-ago totals. Imperial was off 28.68 percent and AMC was down 32.63 percent. AMC's 77.72-percent (corporate) gain was due to Renault Alliance sales of 8,542 during the month.

• Import sales in 1982 included record returns for five companies: Jaguar, Mercedes-Benz, BMW, Volvo and Saab. Jaguar more than doubled its 1981 sales, BMW was up 25.46 percent with an any-month best in December (6,215 sales), Saab was up 26.35 percent, Volvo was up 12.25 percent and Mercedes was up 4.61 percent.

Other highlights included sales increases for Nissan (up 1.17 percent), Porsche (up 28.16 percent) and Renault (up 21.61 percent). Top-selling Toyota was down 8.02 percent in 1982, Honda was down 1.31 percent, Mazda was down 1.77 percent and Subaru was down 1.14 percent. Volkswagen plunged 18.04 percent and Audi was down 9.57 percent.

Import sales were up for the fifth consecutive month in December, climbing 11.26 percent to 183,827 from 165,219 in 1981. During the month, Toyota was up 10.47 percent, Nissan was up 20.33 percent, Honda was up 3.71 percent, Mazda was up 29.26 percent and Subaru was up 3.45 percent.

Industry sales in December were up 20.86 percent, advancing to 631,875 from 522,799 in 1981.

Fourth quarter domestic sales were up an encouraging 16.69 percent, to 1,494,065 from 1,280,413 in 1981. Late-December sales were up 25.52 percent, to 158,466 from 126,251. The annualized domestic rate based on Dec. 21-31 sales was about 6.1 million. The daily selling rate in late December averaged 17,607, up 25.52 percent from 14,027. There were nine days in the period each year.

In the final 10 days of 1982, four of the five U. S. auto makers reported sales improvements. Ford was up 58.41 percent, GM was up 17.61 percent, Chrysler was up 29.85 percent and AMC was up an estimated 40 percent. VWoA fell 47.56 percent below its 1981 sales level.

Market-share distribution during the last period revealed 54.97 percent to GM, 26.35 percent to Ford, 14.68 percent to Chrysler, 2.21 percent to AMC and 1.79 percent to VWoA.

IMPORTED CAR SALES

	December 1982	December 1981	Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 1982	Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 1981
Alfa Romeo	240	268	2,194	2,301
Audi	3,650	4,587	45,954	50,817
BMW	6,215	4,225	52,393	41,761
Challenger	981	1,010	14,128	12,690
Colt/Champ	2,500	3,210	37,129	42,128
Colt	2,310	3,194	37,902	42,796
Datsun	39,779	33,059	470,246	464,805
DeLorean	†	644	2,830	3,009
Fiat	573	1,224	14,113	32,185
Fiesta	.....	.....	.....	32,856
Honda	28,086	27,062	365,865	370,705
Isuzu	1,359	1,203	15,462	17,805
Jaguar	1,219	553	10,349	4,695
Lancia	124	50	1,174	1,068
Mazda	13,285	10,278	163,150	166,088
Mitsubishi	1,260	.....	3,950	.....
Mercedes-Benz	7,399	6,416	65,963	63,059
MG	.....	49	.....	3,712
Peugeot	1,219	1,219	14,323	16,937
Porsche	1,501	1,258	14,407	11,241
Renault	2,031	2,037	37,540	30,869
Rover	.....	53	.....	781
Saab	1,425	1,287	18,463	14,613
Sapporo	1,283	875	13,068	13,326
Subaru	11,594	11,207	150,335	152,062
Toyota	46,147	41,773	530,246	576,491
Triumph	.....	164	.....	9,768
Volkswagen	6,246	5,214	67,352	82,173
Volvo	3,401	3,080	72,374	64,477
TOTAL	183,827	165,219	2,220,910	2,325,218

*Not available

Ford ordered to explain withholding of franchise

ELIZABETH, N. J.—Ford Motor Co. will have to show cause Thursday (Jan. 13) why it has not named the partner in a Lincoln-Mercury dealership the dealer principal since he assumed control of the operation.

The action stems from a suit filed by Robert Beisser, who operates Fletcher Motor Co., a Lincoln-Mercury dealership in Summit, N. J.

Beisser claims in his suit that Ford's failure to name him the dealer principal after his partner left the operation cost him a Datsun franchise and $700,000 in personal funds he invested in the dealership.

In addition, Beisser claims he is unable to restructure the operation and has lost $2 million in funding from potential investors because of the delay.

According to Beisser's suit, he and Edward Mayer, of Rahway, N. J., took control of the dealership in November, 1980, with Mayer having 51 percent of the stock and Beisser 49 percent.

This made the dealership a minority-owned outlet since Mayer is black.

Mayer resigned his position in July of last year and his stock reverted to the company.

Beisser and his financial consultant, Avram Apter, attempted to restructure the company. Over two years, the dealership, once a profitable business, was $1.2 million in debt. In the court papers, Beisser said he invested the funds and Mayer ran the day-to-day business operations.

Beisser alleges in his suit that the reason Ford is not granting him the franchise is because the dealership had been designated a "minority" franchise by Ford, the only one in the state. Beisser claims this has prevented him from being named the dealer principal.

Beisser is asking the State Superior Court to restrain Ford from transferring the franchise and to show cause why he should not be named.

In Detroit, an L-M spokesman said: "Ford Motor Co. does not have minority points, and we do not believe there is any merit to the lawsuit."

No plans to build cars in California, Petersen says

LOS ANGELES. — Donald E. Petersen, president of Ford Motor Co., told a Los Angeles news conference Ford has no plans to build cars in California. Ford's last plant in the state—Milpitas—is scheduled to close this spring.

Petersen said plants on both coasts were justified in the days of the "1-million-a-year Ford," when seven or eight plants were producing one body style.

"There was enough total volume then to sell out the volume in a coast plant," he said. "However, the market has changed dramatically. Now we build a wider range of products."

He said Ford gave the Milpitas plant its best shot by building its two highest volume units—the Escort and F-series pickup—but that the company was unable to make a go of it.

"I'm afraid that with the major changes coupled with Californians buying foreign cars in massive numbers, there is no economic way to be a manufacturer here," he said.

General Motors closed two California assembly plants last year. It still operates one at Van Nuys.

Bankruptcy filing

BERNE, Ind. — Kinard Rudd, doing business as Kinard Rudd Pontiac, Chevrolet and Buick, Inc., and Irene Rudd, both of Berne, have filed a bankruptcy claim in district court in Fort Wayne, Ind. They claim debts of $642,937 and assets of $72,625. Rudd recently closed his dealership.

DOMESTIC CAR SALES

	Dec. 21 to Dec. 31, 1982	Same Period, 1981	December, 1982	Same Month, 1981	Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1982	Same Period, 1981
Renault Alliance	.....	.....	8,542	.....	30,173	.....
Spirit	.....	.....	1,002	1,232	16,182	33,504
Concord	.....	.....	1,633	2,958	30,872	59,846
Pacer	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	111
Eagle	.....	.....	2,580	3,551	35,206	43,221
AMERICAN MOTORS*	3,500	2,500	13,757	7,741	112,433	136,682
Horizon	1,590	1,700	3,943	3,822	46,907	75,377
Turismo/TC3	1,325	1,043	3,284	2,779	39,704	51,815
Reliant/Volare	3,922	4,491	12,034	12,240	146,762	196,997
Plymouth	210	187	465	526	18,255	1,409
Total Plymouth	7,047	7,421	19,726	19,367	251,628	325,598
LeBaron	.....	199	.....	398	.....	36,311
LeBaron K	2,540	1,580	6,315	4,906	88,575	10,680
Cordoba	430	506	957	1,339	15,828	23,904
New Yorker 5th Ave.	1,832	912	4,664	2,546	62,725	5,894
E-Class	1,343	.....	3,177	.....	9,122	.....
Chrysler New Yorker E	96	.....	119	.....	119	17,080
Total Chrysler	6,241	3,197	15,232	9,189	176,369	93,869
Total Imperial	89	128	194	272	2,601	4,649
Omni	1,506	1,317	3,830	3,322	40,002	56,038
Charger/024	1,436	1,139	3,564	3,233	41,275	51,743
Aries/Aspen	4,070	3,518	11,512	9,389	113,076	149,653
Dodge 400	1,261	451	3,035	1,468	28,946	3,150
Diplomat	388	451	949	1,119	24,866	25,598
Mirada/Magnum	204	288	427	686	7,316	13,947
Dodge 600	1,014	.....	2,485	.....	5,624	.....
Dodge St. Regis	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	5,628
Total Dodge	9,879	7,164	25,802	19,217	261,105	305,757
CHRYSLER CORP.	23,256	17,910	60,954	48,045	691,703	729,873
Pinto	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	10,037
EXP	1,001	990	2,658	2,768	39,021	54,502
Escort	9,714	5,725	23,684	14,185	337,667	284,907
Mustang	3,461	2,341	8,688	5,866	119,526	154,985
Fairmont	4,943	3,160	14,457	8,736	139,056	182,909
Granada	1,044	2,867	3,051	7,647	94,750	106,996
Thunderbird	479	1,277	1,347	3,424	42,585	69,775
LTD '83	4,499	.....	11,105	.....	26,820	.....
Ford Crown Victoria	4,258	2,809	11,375	7,720	126,065	113,109
Ford Division	29,399	19,169	76,365	50,346	925,490	977,220
Bobcat	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2,169
LN7	420	308	1,060	1,204	13,107	18,217
Lynx	2,045	1,358	5,675	4,037	95,959	92,809
Zephyr	1,019	681	3,063	2,001	42,363	50,603
Cougar/Monarch	360	1,043	899	3,224	40,829	46,750
XR-7	142	356	454	1,078	15,609	28,706
Capri	979	451	2,740	1,466	31,280	47,151
Marquis '83	1,512	.....	4,137	.....	10,645	.....
Mercury Grd. Marquis	2,570	1,490	7,411	4,305	77,348	53,145
TOTAL Mercury	9,047	5,687	25,439	17,315	327,142	339,550
Cont./Versailles	547	594	1,484	1,475	22,611	4,919
Lincoln	1,714	468	4,660	1,480	42,537	29,178
Mark VI	1,052	443	2,630	1,420	27,920	29,733
Total Lincoln	3,313	1,505	8,774	4,375	93,068	63,830
L-M Division	12,360	7,192	34,215	21,690	420,208	403,380
FORD MOTOR	41,759	26,361	110,578	72,036	1,345,698	1,380,600
Skyhawk	1,384	.....	4,080	.....	46,942	.....
Skylark	2,211	4,217	7,831	11,649	141,766	200,460
Century FD	2,756	920	9,549	2,602	99,873	2,691
Regal Sedan	1,577	2,503	4,961	6,882	78,960	123,678
Regal Coupe	2,749	4,083	8,370	10,926	143,309	208,329
LeSabre	2,564	2,598	7,890	7,119	108,989	82,263
Electra	1,522	1,840	4,854	4,849	59,599	57,234
Riviera	997	1,517	3,235	3,979	43,673	47,964
Buick Division	15,760	17,678	50,770	48,007	723,011	722,617
Cimarron	640	418	1,941	1,212	13,774	14,604
Seville	945	613	2,543	1,719	24,029	22,724
Cadillac	4,930	4,582	13,937	12,884	154,229	138,948
Eldorado	2,029	1,731	5,254	4,785	57,263	54,389
Cadillac Division	8,544	7,344	23,675	20,600	249,295	230,665
Chevette	4,380	5,141	11,946	16,711	231,927	346,307
Cavalier/Monza	3,761	1,611	10,300	5,312	121,392	88,072
Citation/Nova	4,238	5,248	12,073	15,946	186,782	300,184
Camaro	4,093	1,249	11,992	2,588	182,848	94,606
Celebrity	3,950	494	12,005	1,287	101,311	1,361
Malibu	2,267	2,833	7,457	9,348	110,736	211,130
Monte Carlo	2,214	2,490	6,244	7,448	98,954	161,158
Chevrolet	4,770	4,840	14,102	14,896	204,193	210,424
Corvette	541	405	1,437	1,153	22,477	29,039
Chevrolet Division	30,214	24,311	87,556	74,689	1,260,620	1,442,218
Firenza/Starfire	897	.....	2,538	.....	28,282	.....
Omega	1,173	1,712	3,778	4,757	72,392	109,981
Cutlass Ciera	3,236	1,048	9,409	2,716	113,921	2,882
Cutlass	.....	2,996	.....	9,264	.....	187,952
Supreme	5,343	4,137	16,618	12,248	280,566	266,070
Olds 88	4,315	3,618	13,238	10,756	180,840	158,662
Olds 98	2,515	2,613	7,721	7,343	89,222	84,583
Toronado	844	782	2,637	2,557	34,362	38,609
Oldsmobile Division	18,323	16,906	55,939	49,641	799,585	848,739
T-1000	1,416	1,101	3,560	3,721	51,257	55,868
J-2000/Sunbird	1,901	841	4,976	3,180	57,048	75,884
Phoenix	1,322	1,116	3,763	3,896	49,527	82,285
Firebird	3,288	661	9,182	1,595	105,686	52,188
6000	2,414	459	6,617	1,262	55,794	1,325
Bonneville/Lemans	1,956	1,518	5,367	4,715	76,063	73,988
Grand Prix	1,977	1,731	5,323	5,862	83,598	128,236
Pontiac	.....	406	.....	1,502	4,176	82,620
Pontiac Division	14,274	7,833	38,788	25,733	483,149	552,394
GENERAL MOTORS	87,115	74,072	256,728	218,670	3,515,660	3,796,696
VOLKSWAGEN	2,836	5,408	6,031	11,088	91,166	162,445
DOMESTIC TOTAL	158,466	126,251	446,048	357,530	5,756,660	6,206,296
IMPORT TOTAL	.....	.....	183,827	165,219	2,220,910	2,325,218
INDUSTRY TOTAL	.....	.....	631,875	522,749	7,977,570	8,531,514

*—AMC does not issue a nameplate breakdown for 10-day periods.

Makers schedule 77,187 cars

1st week's auto production tops '82

By Patricia Hoffman
Staff Writer

The domestic auto makers were off to a stronger start than in 1982 as the first week of 1983 production showed a sizeable gain over the total for the year-ago period.

Last week's output was estimated at 77,187 units, a 51.62 percent gain from 50,908 built the same week last year. But output fell 18.10 percent from the 94,262 cars built during the final week of production last month. Downtime at 10 facilities was the reason.

Breakdown for last week by company was: General Motors, 75.15 percent; Ford Motor, 16.60 percent; American Motors, 3.88 percent; Volkswagen of America, 4.21 percent, and Honda Motor, 0.16 percent. All of Chrysler Corp.'s facilities were idle last week.

The makers wrapped up the 1982 calendar year with 5,096,771 units, down 18.84 percent from 6,280,045 built in 1981. It was the lowest total since 1958 when only 4,244,045 cars were completed.

AMC showed the only gain for 1982 with 110,050 units, up from 109,319 built in 1981. Of AMC's 1982 total, 57,752 were Renault Alliance models.

VWoA suffered the largest decline last year with 84,246 units, down 49.78 perecnt from 167,755 in 1981.

Totals for the Big Three were: Chrysler, 600,502, down 19.90 percent from 749,687; GM, 3,195,126, down 18.70 percent from 3,930,176, and Ford, 1,104,074, down 16.37 percent from 1,320,198.

Checker Motors, which closed operations in July, built 2,163 units in 1982, down 25.67 percent from 2,910 during a full year of production in 1981.

Honda has built 610 units in the U. S. since production began Nov. 1.

In December, the manufacturers assembled 386,032 cars, up 8.83 percent from 354,697 in the comparable 1981 month.

Despite a favorable December, the fourth-quarter total was only 1,208,217 units, down 7.68 percent from 1,308,774 built during the final three months of assembly cars in 1981. It was the lowest fourth-quarter output since 1951 when only 1,058,390 cars were completed.

Extended holiday closings were scheduled last week at Ford's Dearborn, Metuchen, San Jose and Wayne facilities due to overstocked inventories. Ford's Atlanta and Lorain points remain closed for model changeover.

Also closed last week were all four of Chrysler's assembly points plus GM's Tarrytown facility. GM's Bowling Green plant remained idle for model changeover.

All U. S. car facilities were idle December 23 for the Christmas/New Year holidays. Most resumed operations last week.

Canada's, car, truck makers start year ahead of 1982

Canadian auto and truck production for the first week of 1983 showed substantial gains over the comparable 1982 period when five car and truck facilities remained idle for extended holiday downtime.

The car makers targeted 14,221 units last week, a 34.14 percent gain from 10,602 built during the final week of asembly in 1982 which was shortened due to the Christmas/New Year's holiday. Output was also up from 3,875 cars built in the first week of production last year.

During the 1982 calendar year, the car manufacturers assembled 806,822 units, an 8.51 percent gain from last year's 743,570. The total was below the 846,777 built in 1980.

There were 83,943 cars produced in December of last year, up 65.25 percent from 50,799 in the comparable 1981 period. It was the highest output for that month since 85,377 units were completed in 1978.

During the final three months of assembly in 1982, the car manufacturers built 195,304 units, a 10.52 percent gain from last year's 176,711. In the final quarter of 1980, 227,352 cars were completed.

• The truck makers assembled 6,600 units last week, up 27.49 percent from 5,177 units built during the final week of assembly last year. Output also rose from 2,412 trucks built in the first week of 1982.

There were 466,495 trucks built during the 1982 calendar year, down 24.43 percent from 617,264 in 1981. It was the lowest yearly output for the makers since 389,827 units were assembled in 1975.

Although the December truck total of 40,962 units was higher than November's output, it fell 2.95 percent from 42,207 built in the comparable 1981 period. It was the lowest total for that month since 1979 when 40,104 trucks were assembled.

During the fourth quarter last year, 106,462 trucks were assembled, a 26.48 percent decline from 144,801 built in the final three months of 1981. It was the lowest fourth-quarter total since 89,123 units were built in 1974.

Ford Motor's car and truck facilities, idled Dec. 20 for an early holiday close, remained down last week (Jan. 3) for inventory adjustments.

Also closed last week for inventory control were International Harvester's Chatham and Vancouver truck points.

All other car and truck facilities, idled Dec. 23 for holiday downtime, resumed operations last week.

Arizona Chevy group elects Fitzgerald

PHOENIX. — Ed Fitzgerald, president of Courtesy Chevrolet here, has been elected president of the Valley Chevy Dealers Assn., succeeding Henry Chapman, president of Chapman Chevrolet, in Tempe, Ariz.

Ray Korte, Jr., president of Korte Chevrolet, Scottsdale, Ariz., was elected treasurer.

Downtime trims truck output to 19,974 for week

Extended holiday downtime at 12 truck facilities last week puled domestic truck production for the first week of 1983 down 39.50 percent from the final four days of assembly last year. Output was also down 1.54 percent from the comparable 1982 period when there were 13 assembly points idle for extended holiday period.

The truck makers estimated 19,974 units last week, down from 33,017 built during the final week of production last year which was shortened due to the Christmas/New Year's holiday. Output was also below the 20,286 units assembled during the first week of 1982.

There were 1,908,725 trucks assembled in 1922, a 12.20 percent gain from 1,701,122 in 1981. It was the highest yearly output since 2,973,498 units were completed in 1979.

The December total of 116,552 units just about broke even with the 116,716 units assembled in the comparable 1981 month, although it was the lowest output for the period since 1962 when only 111,031 units were completed.

The fourth-quarter total, however, showed a fractional gain with 401,726 units from the 400,548 trucks built during the last three months of 1981. It was the highest output for that quarter since 1980 when 469,651 units were completed.

TRUCK PRODUCTION IN U. S.†

	Week Ended Jan. 8, 1983	Week Ended Jan. 9, 1982	Week Ended Dec. 25, 1982	Dec. Total	1981 Total	1982 Total
CHEVROLET	8,396	13,528	10,470	29,570	548,379	653,396
DODGE	.....	.....	1,921	6,767	98,240	121,916
FORD	7,892	.....	14,887	54,004	617,375	713,426
GMC	2,351	4,223	3,689	14,266	173,251	224,305
INTERNATIONAL	285	1,135	605	3,308	62,861	45,114
VOLKSWAGEN	.....	.....	.....	.....	37,392	8,086
JEEP	.....	.....	815	5,277	92,248	85,472
AM GENERAL	50*	.....	30*	160*	3,616	2,410*
MISCELLANEOUS	1,000*	1,400*	600*	3,200*	67,760	54,600*
Total Trucks, U. S.	19,974	20,286	33,017	116,552	1,701,122	1,908,725

CANADIAN TRUCK PRODUCTION

	Week Ended Jan. 8, 1983	Week Ended Jan. 9, 1982	Week Ended Dec. 25, 1982	Dec. Total	1981 Total	1982 Total
CHRYSLER CORP.	2,556	.....	1,783	4,341	85,427	95,410
FORD MOTOR	244	339	116	22,429	278,810	132,773
GENERAL MOTORS	3,800	1,828	3,115	13,314	242,275	227,573
INTERNATIONAL	.....	245	163	878	10,752	10,739
Total Trucks, Canada	6,600	2,412	5,177	40,962	617,264	466,495
N. American Trucks	26,574	22,698	38,194	157,514	2,318,386	2,375,220

†—Now includes window van production. *—Estimated.
Jeep includes commercial only. AM General includes government-destined vehicles.

U. S. CAR PRODUCTION

	Week Ended Jan. 8, 1983	Week Ended Jan. 9, 1982	Week Ended Dec. 25, 1982	Dec. Total	1981 Total	1982 Total
AMERICAN MOTORS	3,000	.....	2,885	12,013	109,319	110,050
AMC Total	.....	.....	634	1,975	109,319	52,298
Spirit	.....	.....	.....	.....	35,143	12,973
Concord	.....	.....	.....	65	49,480	17,651
Eagle	.....	.....	634	1,910	24,696	21,674
Renault Total	3,000	.....	2,251	10,038	.....	57,752
Alliance	3,000	.....	2,251	10,038	.....	57,752
CHRYSLER CORP.	.....	.....	11,796	50,426	749,687	600,502
Plymouth Total	.....	.....	4,492	20,256	365,841	241,181
Horizon	.....	.....	1,592	7,466	139,353	77,572
Reliant	.....	.....	2,827	12,580	216,901	162,053
Caravelle ('81)	.....	.....	.....	.....	2,139	.....
Caravelle ('83)	.....	.....	73	210	.....	1,556
Gran Fury	.....	.....	.....	.....	7,448	.....
Chrysler Total	.....	.....	2,146	8,587	57,340	114,443
LeBaron	.....	.....	1,261	4,836	52,478	95,360
Chrysler	.....	.....	.....	.....	4,862	.....
Chrysler E-Class	.....	.....	885	3,751	.....	19,083
Dodge Total	.....	.....	5,158	21,583	326,506	244,878
Omni	.....	.....	1,731	6,716	126,224	72,456
Aries	.....	.....	2,382	10,614	170,139	129,235
Diplomat	.....	.....	.....	.....	12,644	.....
Dodge 400	.....	.....	401	1,720	13,817	30,481
Dodge 600	.....	.....	644	2,533	.....	12,706
St. Regis	.....	.....	.....	.....	3,682	.....
FORD MOTOR	12,810	1,496	23,211	87,802	1,320,198	1,104,074
Ford Division	6,551	.....	16,019	55,240	892,043	690,655
Escort	.....	.....	6,332	17,573	351,437	264,972
Fairmont	2,878	.....	2,395	10,350	176,246	128,519
Mustang	.....	.....	3,242	11,649	153,719	127,371
LTD/Granada	2,978	.....	3,420	13,513	103,702	132,034
Thunderbird	.....	.....	.....	.....	64,328	29,336
Crown Victoria/Ford	695	.....	623	1,979	40,886	2,034
EXP	.....	.....	7	176	1,725	6,389
L-M Division	6,259	1,496	7,192	32,562	428,155	413,419
Mercury Total	4,215	.....	5,548	24,518	363,970	315,799
Lynx	.....	.....	1,286	4,583	116,905	81,114
Capri	.....	.....	377	1,545	50,336	32,704
Zephyr	978	.....	693	3,073	51,868	40,406
Marquis/Cougar	1,030	.....	1,436	7,227	49,831	24,858
Cougar/XR7	.....	.....	.....	.....	28,223	46,543
Gr. Marquis/Marquis	2,207	.....	1,749	8,037	65,720	88,404
LN7	.....	.....	7	53	1,087	1,770
Lincoln Total	2,044	1,496	1,644	8,044	64,185	97,620
Continental ('82)	408	748	329	1,609	11,894	20,052
Lincoln	959	378	771	3,960	26,651	47,609
Mark VI	677	370	544	2,475	25,640	29,959
GENERAL MOTORS	58,007	49,412	54,146	227,847	3,930,176	3,195,126
Buick Division	14,932	7,422	13,727	55,259	839,966	751,332
Skylark	.....	1,471	2,870	8,829	239,175	137,810
Skyhawk J	1,575	.....	1,248	4,805	6	65,549
Century	2,710	2,597	1,977	7,304	102,968	111,698
Regal	5,932	.....	3,294	16,770	267,708	209,068
Buick	3,950	3,354	3,381	13,506	171,834	183,325
Riviera	765	.....	957	4,045	58,275	43,882
Cadillac Division	6,611	3,750	4,867	22,000	259,135	246,355
Cimarron	496	154	488	2,063	22,308	10,404
Seville	560	.....	422	1,785	23,344	22,706
Eldorado	1,595	.....	971	4,127	57,861	56,627
Cadillac	3,960	3,596	2,986	14,025	155,622	156,618
Chevrolet Division	14,503	15,707	16,727	70,157	1,463,165	1,013,795
Chevette	.....	.....	3,889	16,210	360,848	208,335
Cavalier	3,028	5,325	2,245	8,518	139,817	95,862
Celebrity	1,450	2,196	1,019	4,355	23,833	66,361
Camaro	3,947	2,833	3,083	13,147	99,050	213,560
Citation	1,200	2,115	2,149	8,139	300,653	159,062
Malibu	2,425	1,254	2,014	9,369	223,749	125,110
Monte Carlo	1,863	1,081	1,428	6,639	139,899	81,131
Chevrolet	590	319	900	3,780	147,332	42,648
Corvette	.....	584	.....	.....	27,984	21,786
Oldsmobile Division	15,095	16,037	13,437	57,700	825,540	765,496
Omega	.....	2,614	1,252	3,936	121,617	70,955
Firenza	595	.....	504	2,600	.....	44,432
Cutlass	4,800	4,826	3,951	19,620	361,640	215,822
Cutlass/Ciera	2,440	3,235	2,222	7,686	24,035	118,750
Oldsmobile	6,460	5,362	4,879	21,206	274,373	280,947
Toronado	800	.....	629	2,652	43,875	34,590
Pontiac Division	6,866	6,496	5,388	22,731	542,370	418,148
Acadian†	.....	.....	56	75	18,138	9,933
2000	1,596	1,191	1,609	5,002	91,465	41,790
1000	892	.....	614	3,897	88,871	33,725
Firebird	1,583	1,311	1,279	5,360	48,970	127,904
Phoenix	715	657	542	1,982	96,597	44,027
G. Prix/B'ville ('83)	2,080	3,337	1,288	6,415	127,227	130,805
A6000	.....	.....	.....	.....	19,011	29,964
LeMans	.....	.....	.....	.....	42,027	.....
Pontiac	.....	.....	.....	.....	10,064	.....
HONDA*	120*	.....	80*	320*	.....	610*
VOLKSWAGEN	3,250	.....	2,124	7,624	167,755	84,246
CHECKER	.....	.....	.....	.....	2,910	2,163
Total Cars, U. S.	77,187	50,908	94,242	386,032	6,280,045	5,096,771

CANADIAN CAR PRODUCTION

	Week Ended Jan. 8, 1983	Week Ended Jan. 9, 1982	Week Ended Dec. 25, 1982	Dec. Total	1981 Total	1982 Total
AMERICAN MOTORS	1,200	.....	974	2,053	34,535	30,305
CHRYSLER CORP.	4,128	3,314	2,789	7,014	69,145	149,442
FORD MOTOR	313	336	118	51,057	191,928	283,309
GENERAL MOTORS	8,400	.....	6,541	23,054	437,622	333,648
VOLVO	180	225	180	765	10,336	10,118
Total Cars, Canada	14,221	3,875	10,602	83,943	743,570	806,822
N. American Cars	91,408	54,783	104,844	469,975	7,023,615	5,903,593
N. American Trucks	26,574	22,698	38,194	157,514	2,318,386	2,375,220
North American Cars and Trucks	117,982	77,481	143,038	627,489	9,342,001	8,278,813

†—All Acadians and Caravelles are built for sale in Canada. *—Estimated.
*—Honda figures are estimated. Actual Honda production totals will be released next Spring.

C2700-1 1/17/83

Automotive News

January 17, 1983

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A look into the future

Electronics cram Continental Concept 100

Ford Motor Co. says this concept car has the largest number of functioning advanced electronic features ever contained in a single vehicle. The Continental Concept 100, incidentally, bears a very strong resemblance to the 1984 Continental due to debut in March, 1984. Such a vehicle lets Ford engineers and customers dream a bit, gives a look at what's possible and dispels consumer concern over electronic complexity, says Ford President Donald E. Petersen.

Number of cars in stock falls but supply climbs to 65 days

By Richard A. Wright
Assistant Managing Editor

The domestic new-car inventory jumped during December to a 65-day supply from a 52-day stockpile at the beginning of the month.

The Jan. 1 stockpile totaled 1,125,989 units, which was actually down from 1,164,338 on Dec. 1. The higher days-supply figure Jan. 1 was the result of a sharply lower selling rate during December.

Table on Page 42

While the supply of new cars was up compared with a month earlier, a 65-day stock is not really heavy for that time of year and is certainly not alarming when compared with Jan. 1 a year earlier, when the industry had a record 107-day supply.

The unit count of 1,125,989 continues a downward trend which has held since the beginning of the '83 model year and is the lowest since Dec. 1, 1970.

While the general health of the auto industry is not particularly good, the inventory situation must be considered one of the brighter spots. Any sudden outburst of sales would quickly result in shortages in a number of lines, but that kind of problem would clearly be welcomed by the industry.

While all the corporate makers reduced their unit counts during December, only Chrysler Corp. and American Motors went into January with a lighter days-supply figure.

General Motors led the increase in supply, boosting its inventory from 47 days Dec. 1 to 66 days Jan. 1. Heaviest supplies were in small cars, while Cadillac stocks dwindled.

Ford Motor Co. entered 1983 with a 63-day supply, up from 57 days a month earlier. Ford's inventory was also heavier in small cars than large, but the gap was not as great as at GM.

Chrysler Corp. trimmed its supply during the month from 69 to 62 days and reversed the general industry trend by being lightest in small cars.

AMC opened January with a 78-day supply, compared with a 79-day stock a month earlier. Volkswagen of America had an 87-day supply of U. S.-built Rabbits Jan. 1, up from 67 days a month earlier.

The Jan. 1 domestic inventory was divided this way: GM, 57.68 percent; Ford Motor Co., 23.93 percent; Chrysler Corp., 12.95 percent; AMC, 3.65 percent, and VWoA, 1.79 percent.

A month earlier, the domestic inventory was divided as follows: GM, 57.58 percent; Ford Motor Co., 23.93 percent; Chrysler Corp., 13.29 percent; AMC,

Continued on Page 42, Col. 1

Fiat to withdraw from U.S.; sales going to Bricklin

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TURIN. — Fiat plans a corporate withdrawal from the U. S. car market within 90 days, according to European sources.

Only two Fiat models — the X 1/9 and Spider 2000 — are now actively marketed in the U. S. and sales of these will continue under a new company headed by Malcolm Bricklin, Fiat insiders say.

Fiat executives were unavailable for comment, but a formal announcement is expected shortly.

Bricklin, who has been operating on the fringes of the auto industry since the demise of his own auto-making project involving the gull-winged Bricklin SV-1, plans to establish a network of distributors to handle the X 1/9 and Spider.

Although those two cars originally were built by Fiat, the Spider is now produced by Pininfarina and the X 1/9 by Bertone. They are marketed in some European countries as Fiats and others as the Pininfarina 2000 and the Bertone X 1/9. It is believed the cars will be sold in the U. S. by Bricklin as the Pininfarina 2000 and Bertone X 1/9.

Fiat Motors of North America, meanwhile, is making an effort to clear the decks of about 5,000 leftover 1982 models by offering rebates of up to $2,000.

Sources here say it is likely Bricklin will retail cars through the approximately 400 dealerships now holding Fiat franchises.

It is believed likely also that Bricklin will take over parts support of other Fiat models now on the road in the U. S. Negotiations reportedly are continuing with an aim toward Bricklin assuming the warranty obligation for Fiats in the U. S.

Ironically, the news that Fiat had thrown in the towel on U. S. sales emerged as Fiat prepared to bring 700 European auto writers to Florida for the press introduction of a new model, the Fiat Uno. The Uno is about to be marketed in Europe, but Fiat has made no plans to sell it in the U. S.—obviously a result of its plan to retreat from the American market.

Fiat's decision to abandon the U. S. caps a long and fitful effort to become a major part of the American automotive scene.

Fiat was one of the pioneer car firms in the U. S. before World War I, but then pulled out of the market until the 1940s, when a few Topolinos were exported to the U. S.

It made a serious effort to become a market force in the U.S. with the beginning of the "import boom" in the 1950s. Fiat

Continued on Page 42, Col. 1

breaking news

Shakeup at VWoA

WARREN, Mich. — Volkswagen of America was putting the final touches on a realignment of its organization and a reduction in workforce as AUTOMOTIVE NEWS went to press. All departments — including styling, body engineering, finance and personnel—are involved, but the realignment is not expected to affect VWoA's product engineering program.

One of the jobs eliminated in the reorganization was that of director of styling design. William H. Maypole had held that position. Design activity may be continued under another department.

Avanti to race

LOS ANGELES. — Stephen Blake, chairman and chief executive officer of his newly acquired Avanti Motor Car Co., announced that the company will field a car in the 24

See BREAKING NEWS, Page 8, Col. 1

FDA and CDA unite to form Dealers Alliance

Ford, Chevy dealer groups merge

By John A. Russell
New York Staff Writer

PORT CHESTER, N. Y.—The Ford Dealers Alliance and the Chevrolet Dealers Alliance have merged into one association called the Dealers Alliance.

In proposals approved last week by the boards of directors of both groups, the two organizations will now be divisions of the newly formed parent association.

The FDA has 1,700 members nationwide, while the CDA, still in its development stage, has 244 members concentrated in the Northeast.

According to the resolutions passed last week, the FDA board becomes the board of directors of the new Dealers Alliance. The CDA board will become an advisory board. The FDA officers will be the officers of the Dealers Alliance.

Larry Tynan, president of CDA, told AUTOMOTIVE NEWS that the two divisions will still fight their respective make battles separately, but the common problems confronting all auto dealers will be handled by the one alliance.

Another distinction of the motions passed at the annual meetings of the groups is that financial matters and future income will be kept separate.

• The two organizations formed a coalition last spring to work together on their common problems.

This unprecedented move saw the two groups specify the areas in which they would be working together, which included pricing, overdealering, product identification and financing. Since then, the issue of fleet incentives has come to the forefront.

Tynan said there is a need for an alliance approach to bring about change and noted that the CDA has "weathered its growing pains" and is still in existence.

Since the coalition of the two groups was announced, he said, the CDA membership has increased from 125 to 244 and more interest has been expressed in the group.

The legal unification of the two organizations will help the CDA in its growing stages since the FDA has its operational systems in place.

The formation of this new umbrella organization also signifies a move to broaden the base of the once-considered-radical FDA.

For both, there is another benefit to the move. Apparently, during recent months, the groups have been told that for tax purposes they must broaden their representation to retain nonprofit status.

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As he lifts curtain on new product lines

Iacocca rips government 'disarray'

By John A. Russell
New York Correspondent

NEW YORK. — Laying the blame for the slumping economy entirely on the federal government's doorstep, Lee Iacocca, chairman of Chrysler Corp., said that while his company is "ready to go," the "incredible disarray in Washington is holding the economy in limbo."

Speaking at a news conference here last week, Iacocca was presenting new product lines for '83 and into '84 with the goal in mind of showing that Chrysler has pulled itself through its financial disasters and can successfully compete in the marketplace.

Chrysler will compete in several market segments, he said, including performance vehicles, sports cars and the market for its full line from subcompacts to family sedans and wagons.

But while Chrysler is ready, the economy is not and Iacocca said flatly, "our government has failed to develop consistent and realistic policies on interest rates, energy and trade. And all the while the deficits grow."

He singled out four areas that he said need action by the federal government. First, he said, the prime interest rate has to fall below the 10 percent level.

Iacocca said that there is proof in the actions by the auto companies with 11.9 percent consumer financing that lower rates spark sales.

Cutting federal deficits by trimming defense spending and matching the cut in that area with the same in social programs is necessary, he said.

• Iacocca advocated adding 25 cents per gallon to the gasoline tax rather than the one that currently passed at 5 cents per gallon to bring the price of gasoline to the range of $1.40 to $1.50 per gallon to prevent a sharp upturn in usage.

He launched a blistering attack on the federal government's policies regarding Japan.

"A $20-billion trade deficit every year will crucify our economy," he said, adding, "it's time we told the Japanese to knock off their unfair trade practices."

He said it is also time for the Japanese to bring the valuation of the yen into line with the dollar as well as noting that U. S. companies should have the same tax breaks on exports as the Japanese get.

"And until those things happen, it's time we told the Japanese to set a voluntary quota of an honest 1.5 million vehicles coming into this country."

Iacocca doesn't think that the Japanese are moving toward manufacturing in the U. S. with any enthusiasm. He said he thought it was "reasonable for the U. S. to say this is our market and you (the Japanese) can have 1.5 million units, that's all."

As for his company, he said he was holding the conference to "dispel some myths."

• One of those is that Chrysler has not pulled itself out of its financial difficulties. Losses have been turned into profits, he said, and Chrysler has doubled productivity and has built a cash cushion.

"We've cut our fixed costs by $1.2 billion and cut our breakeven point in half since 1979," he said.

But the thrust of this meeting was product from Chrysler, which Iacocca says proves the company is here to stay and can compete. He introduced the sports car the company will have for 1984 — the Dodge Daytona and Chrysler Laser.

These two models, he said, mate fuel efficiency with performance. They have a five-speed transmission designed and manufactured by an American car company. This was an obvious reference to the fact that both General Motors and Ford Motor Co. import their five-speed gearboxes.

Running down the list, Iacocca divided the products into several groupings. Under performance, he listed the Shelby Charger and the Dodge ES.

Convertibles were represented by the LeBaron, including a rumble-seat version.

Along with these models he showed a model not slated for introduction yet, but which is being test marketed. It was a two-seater convertible designed to compete with the Mercedes-Benz 380 SL. Iacocca referred to it as "our answer" to the Mercedes two-seater.

• Iacocca said this group of models cost the company more than $1 billion and added that by 1986, Chrysler will have spent another $6.6 billion on future products. He claimed that Chrysler puts a larger percentage of its budget into product and added that because of the company's efficiency, that amount was the equivalent of $12 billion for the competition.

Iacocca said the company anticipated it would keep its 10 percent share of market in both cars and trucks for 1983.

The company would show a total profit, for 1982, he said, despite a fourth-quarter loss caused by the strike in Canada.

Two-person turbo

Chrysler's two-place turbo convertible prototype, a 90-inch-wheelbase LeBaron derivative, is being shown at selected 1983 auto shows to measure consumer interest in small specialty cars. It features a new 2.2-liter turbocharged engine with five-speed gearbox and Eurosport suspension.

Performance sports car

The Chrysler Laser turbo sports car is planned for 1984-model introduction. Designed on a 97-inch wheelbase, it will offer room for four and will use a 2.2-liter turbocharged engine with electronic fuel injection.

Ford, on TV show, favors local content

By Joseph Bohn
Marketing Editor

Henry Ford II said he personally favored some kind of automotive local-content protection, that Ford Motor would offer "larger cars" until '86 and that his 1971 meeting with President Nixon was "proper."

Speaking on PBS Late Night TV, Ford said that, as a director of Ford Motor, he officially supported the company's stand against local-content laws — but personally "I don't agree with it, totally."

"Every country in the world has local-content laws of one kind or another," he said. "The Japanese are as bad as anybody . . . The Japanese do not trade fairly. Until they do, we've got to take a strong position in this country and make them stand up and do things the way we do them — or do something to protect our local businesses."

Ford's main objection to the content law passed in the House of Representatives late last year was that it was "inadequate and badly drafted."

He felt that with current improvements in U. S. autos, the Japanese share of market could be reduced to 15 percent in three to five years, if the industry can keep its wage costs down and improve productivity.

He added that "we've got to work out some way with our labor unions, so they don't have plant restrictions and other kinds of things within a plant that have nothing to do with how much you pay an employe. It's how he performs in the plant. If we can't have freedom in that area, we've got some difficult problems."

• He said Ford Motor would continue offering "larger cars at least until the '86 model year," even then continuing its larger Lincoln Town Car, although big Ford and Mercury nameplates would be downsized.

Defending his 1971 meeting with President Nixon and John Erlichman, Ford said, "It is proper for any manufacturer in any industry in any kind of business to talk to their congressman, to anybody in the administrative branch, right up to the President of the United States.

"If we don't have that privilege — take it over, socialism . . . I've visited with every President right up until the present one on automotive problems, privately and in relatively small meetings."

The Reagan Administration, he added, has not made life any easier for the industry, but "at least they have not made it more difficult."

Ford said he'd like to see a three-year suspension or hiatus in Consumer Price Index indexing to control inflation, interest rates, wages and the escalating government deficit.

"I feel the cost of living (index), whether it's in the auto industry or steel industry or in government or wherever has been a disaster for all of us because it just created more inflation than we would have had otherwise," Ford said.

Social Security increases, taxes, etc., are all geared to CPI increases.

Ford predicted that 1984 car sales will improve to 8.8 million industrywide, from 7.9 million in 1983.

Ford said he would soon retire to Florida full-time, and had just about completed an earlier plan of visiting the company's worldwide locations which he began upon his retirement as chairman.

AMC says UAW holds key to Canadian future

By Edward Lapham
Senior Editor

LOS ANGELES. — American Motors would like to continue building vehicles in Canada if it can secure cost-lowering "cooperation" from its UAW local there, AMC President Jose J. Dedeurwaerder told Automotive News last week.

"We don't want to leave Canada, but we need a cooperative attitude on the part of the union," Dedeurwaerder said following a luncheon here.

"The Brampton local is the only one which is not cooperating with us on the matter of lowering costs. They told us they don't even want to talk to us. I don't know what's the matter with them. What can we do?" he said.

Last spring, Canadian workers refused to participate in a new AMC/UAW contract which involves an employe investment plan. The plan was negotiated in the U. S. Hourly workers invested between $110 million and $115 million. That money was earmarked for AMC's $1 billion new-product program.

At the Automotive News World Congress last August, Dedeurwaerder said the Canadian segment of the UAW took a destructive stance when it refused to negotiate an employe investment plan for Canadian AMC workers.

UAW Secretary-Treasurer Raymond Majerus, director of the AMC department, said that without the U. S. agreement, Renault would not have put any additional money into the company. He said without that money, the new Jeep XJ and other future products would have been in danger of cancellation.

AMC announced last month it would close its Canadian plant indefinitely in April. Since that time, there have been discussions with Chrysler about the possibility of assembling Chrysler rear-wheel-drive cars in the small AMC plant on the outskirts of Toronto.

Dedeurwaerder declined to say which vehicles the auto maker would like to assemble in Brampton or when it might consider reactivating the plant or if the April closing could become permanent.

He also criticized the U. S.-Canada Automotive Trade Agreement (Auto Pact) and the restrictions it puts on car makers.

"The whole Auto Pact needs to be changed, renegotiated," he said. "It is outdated protectionism. There are other, better ways to protect jobs."

The Brampton plant was opened in December, 1960. In the 1970s, it produced Hornet and Gremlin models, largely for distribution in the Eastern areas of the U. S. and Canada, until June, 1978.

In September, 1978, the plant was converted to Jeep CJ production. In mid-1980, output was switched to Eagle and Concord models, which have a relatively short life expectancy in the AMC-Renault North American game plan.

Some analysts have speculated the plant could be converted to Alliance output.

Straight-time capacity for the plant, small by North American standards, is about 65,000 units annually.

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58th year — No. 4950

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Scania testing transit bus in U. S.

Buses like this one are being tested by Saab-Scania in Norwalk, Conn., and the results have been good, according to Ralph Millet, director of the Scania Division in the U. S. The company plans to decide in March on whether to produce the transit vehicles in the U. S.

Scania studies U.S. as truck, bus market

By Marjorie Sorge

SODERTALJE, Sweden. — Saab-Scania is testing the waters in the U. S. and there's a possibility that bus operations could begin next year — a move which could lead to U. S. truck production in the future.

Kaj Lindgren, head of internal information for Scania, told AUTOMOTIVE NEWS the decision on bus production will be made in March. He said the buses probably will be built in the Greater Newark area.

A site hasn't been chosen, but both Maryland and Connecticut have offered Scania incentives to operate a plant in their states.

The company has not decided whether to purchase an existing plant or build from scratch.

But Scania is leaning toward either building the plant itself or on a lease-back basis, according to Ralph Millet, director of the Scania Division in the U. S.

If the bus operation becomes reality, a separate company could be established — Scania Bus Co., Lindgren said.

Millet said the company hopes to get the Scania name known in the U. S. through bus production.

• Then, if the market allows, he said, Scania could begin producing trucks in the U. S. However, he emphasized that Scania has

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truck personnel

Davis, Bowie elected Mack Trucks directors

Garner L. Davis, executive vice president-marketing, and **Donald S. Bowie Jr.,** executive vice president, general counsel and secretary, have been elected directors of Mack Trucks, Inc.

Davis has been with Mack since 1946, starting as a sales trainee at the Houston factory branch. Bowie joined the firm's legal staff in 1956 and is a member of the Executive Committee and a director of Mack Financial Corp.

Mack also announced the election of **Richard F. Murphy** as vice president-marketing distribution. Since 1978, he had been vice president-Mid-Liner marketing and sales.

Murphy replaces **Paul D. Cantrell,** who has been elected vice president-international operations. He will be responsible for overseas distribution, production and service operations.

Garner L. Davis

Richard F. Murphy

W. W. (Skip) Hall, district manager-Atlantic region since 1981, has been named vice president-Central region, an area covering 11 states with headquarters in Chicago.

Perkins names Mooney field sales manager

Perkins Engine Co. has appointed **Paul D. Mooney** to the newly created post of field sales manager, automotive and fleet accounts. He will be responsible for sales of the Perkins T6.3544, a 140-HP, turbocharged diesel certified by the EPA for applications in 49 states.

Mooney joined Perkins last year as a national accounts sales manager in the industrial-equipment industry. He previously was with the Detroit Diesel Allison Division in truck fleet sales and with Brockway and White Motor in sales.

Ford Tractor moves Bechler to engine post

Robert C. Bechler has been appointed engine manager in the newly formed truck and industrial programs office at Ford Tractor Operations.

He joined Ford Motor Co. in 1953 and prior to the new appointment, he had been marketing plans manager for equipment and consumer products, Ford Tractor & Implement Operations-North America.

truck industry news

Chevy is No. 1 for first time since '76

'82 sales rise 13.6 pct.

Retail sales of new trucks of all types in the U. S. in 1982 were the highest since 1979, the year of the Iranian revolution, oil embargo, soaring fuel prices and widespread gasoline shortages.

During the year, according to preliminary reports, franchised dealers and factory outlets sold 2,559,218 units, an increase of 13.6 percent over the previous year's 2,251,921. In 1979, sales totaled 3,476,086 units, both domestic and imports.

The introduction of its S-10 compact pickup truck early in the 1982 model year enabled Chevrolet to regain truck-sales leadership from Ford in 1982 for the first time since 1976.

Chevrolet dealers retailed 808,805 new trucks in calendar 1982, and 185,919 of them were S-10s. Ford, which did not introduce its compact Ranger pickup until mid-way in the first quarter, reported 791,547 sales during the year. The total included 104,396 Rangers.

Light trucks were the only market segment to prosper in 1982, with the compacts leading the way. Big trucks, hard hit by the recession and deregulation, dropped considerably below year-earlier levels.

• Sales of light trucks last year were 17.3 percent higher, climbing from 2,026,264 units in 1981 to 2,375,923. There were increases in all three weight classifications in the light-truck segment.

With the entry of the Big Three domestic compacts, sales of the small pickups hit an all-time high in 1982. The 12-month total soared to 766,628 units, a gain of 53.7 percent from the previous year's 498,677.

At the end of the year, the Japanese-built pickups still led the domestics in retail sales, but their share of the market dropped dramatically during the year—from almost 90 percent in 1981 to a little more than 50 percent.

Sales of the imports—Toyota, Datsun, Mazda, Isuzu, Mitsubishi, Ford Courier, Chevrolet LUV, Dodge Ram 50 and Plymouth Arrow — totaled 407,450 units in 1982, and accounted for 53.1 percent of the calendar-year count for small pickups.

In 1981, on the other hand, import deliveries hit a record 439,171 units and took 88.1 percent of the industry total. Imports were down 7.2 percent in 1982, while sales of the domestic entries were more than six times higher than the 1981 total, 359,178 units versus 59,506.

Sales of big trucks, both mediums and heavies, were down 18.8 percent in 1982 to 183,295 units, compared with 225,657 the previous year.

Medium trucks were the big losers in 1982. Sales dropped

Continued on Page 44, Col. 1

Grand jury indicts 3 in diesel-Soviet deal

By Jake Kelderman
Washington Staff Writer

WASHINGTON. — A federal grand jury here indicted three men for allegedly attempting to sell, to the Soviet Union, a $5-million diesel engine assembly line for use in the giant Kama River truck complex.

The engine assembly line is considered by the federal government to be a controlled high technology commodity that would be of more than industrial interest to the Soviets.

Under "Operation Exodus," a program inaugurated in October, 1981, to prevent the export of advanced technology to the USSR and its allies, its export without government permission is considered illegal.

Named in the 11-count indictment were Stephen G. Carter, a Chicago-area businessman involved in the export business; Paul Sakwa, a Virginia export broker and Gerald F. McCall, a Canadian citizen.

According to William V. Von Raab, commissioner of the U. S. Customs Service, the three allegedly conspired to sell the assembly line to the Soviets by way of a dummy French connection.

Carter and the others were going to arrange for a European corporation to provide a false shippers' export declaration showing the ultimate destination of the engine line as France, Von Raab said. Then from there they would ship it to the Kama River plant, he said.

• Von Raab said Customs learned of the plan from tips and nabbed the alleged perpetrators by way of a dummy corporation of its own. Known as Arinfi Export Corp., the dummy company was contacted by Carter and the others to aid in getting the false shippers' declaration, Von Raab said.

The diesel engine assembly line was built by Ingersoll-Rand Corp. to Kama River specifications a number of years ago when relations between the

Continued on Page 15, Col. 1

Keynoter at TRX-83 to be Mack's Curcio

McLEAN, Va. — John B. Curcio, president, Mack Trucks, Inc., will be the keynote speaker at the 20th annual convention of NADA's American Truck Division in Boston, April 9-12. The theme for TRX-83 is "A Beacon for Success."

Curcio joined Mack in 1967 as assistant to the sales vice president, left in 1971 to become chairman and president of Crane Carrier Co., and returned to Mack in 1976 as marketing distribution vice president.

Mitsubishi cuts truck prices; leader is $5,749

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. — Mitsubishi Motor Sales of America has jumped into the small-truck price war by cutting the base price of its Mighty Max pickup $240 to a MSRP of $5,749.

The company also reduced prices on its two- and four-wheel drive turbodiesel trucks.

"We are offering Mitsubishi dealers factory pricing revisions on trucks already in their inventory so that reduced prices can be passed on to buyers immediately," said Robert Stallsmith, MMSA vice president - general manager, sales.

The new price on the Mighty Max beats Mazda's $5,795 on the B-2000 and Datsun's $5,858 on its Li'l Hustler.

Mitsubishi turbodiesel price reductions average $210, with two-wheel-drive versions lowered $180 to $7,879 and 4WD versions cut $240 for a base sticker of $9,938.

Weathershields for big trucks

Cyplas (N.A.), Ltd., North East, Pa., has introduced "Big Rig" weathershields for all makes of large trucks. The firm said they provide draft-free ventilation while preventing rain, dust, dirt and snow from entering the cab. The shields, made of cast sheet optical-grade acrylic, are mounted to the door frame with clips, eliminating the need to drill holes.